



Arizona Department of Child Safety

Douglas A. Ducey
Governor

Gregory McKay
Director

Information for Release		4/1/15
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Date of the notification to DCS: 3/22/2013

Child Fatality

Date of fatality or near fatality: 10/29/2012

Child's name: Dante Houck

Age at time of incident: 10 months

Alleged perpetrator(s) name and age:

Heather Bissland – age 18

Devin Houck – age 18

City, town or general location of residence of the child and alleged perpetrator(s):

Mesa, AZ

Circumstances of the fatality or near fatality that indicate it was the result of abuse or neglect:

On March 22, 2013, the Department of Child Safety received a report regarding 10-month-old Dante Houck. The report stated Dante had died on October 29, 2012. An investigation was initiated and found that the parents, Heather Bissland and Devin Houck, had left Dante unattended in an empty bathtub for over 17 hours without checking on him. The Medical Examiner ruled the manner and cause of death as "Undetermined," but stated severe undernourishment and probable dehydration were significant contributory factors. The Arizona Child Fatality Review Team, which includes at least one medical doctor, determined that Dante's death was due to neglect. In addition, the DCS investigation determined that Dante's death was a result of the parents' neglect based on their failure to provide him with adequate nutrition, fluids and supervision.

Whether DCS has received any reports or past cases, of child abuse, abandonment or neglect involving the child and the current alleged abusive or neglectful parent, guardian or custodian*:

DCS has received no prior reports of abuse or neglect involving Dante Houck and Heather Bissland or Devin Houck.

1. Actions taken by DCS in response to the fatality or near fatality of the child including:

The Department of Child Safety conducted a joint investigation with the Mesa Police Department.

2. Actions taken regarding the child and/or other children in the home:

There were no other children in the home.

3. Whether the agency is or intends to provide direct services or service referrals to the family:

No services were provided.



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*Posted information provides whether there have been reports, or any current or past cases, of child abuse, abandonment or neglect involving the child who has died or suffered a near fatality and the current alleged abusive or neglectful parent, guardian or custodian pursuant to A.R.S. § 8-807(F)(2)(a)(iv).

*Posted information may be updated as new information becomes available.

Information, if any, regarding the child and other family or household members, not specifically related to the fatality or near fatality, is not posted on the website. This also applies to information, if any, regarding the alleged perpetrator(s) and other family or household members.